



THE  
ANNUAL REPORT  
OF THE  
Medical Officer of Health  
FOR THE  
URBAN DISTRICT OF AMBLE  
For the Year 1923.

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To the Chairman and Members of the Amble Urban District Council.

Gentlemen,—

It gives me great pleasure to lay before you a very favourable report on the health and sanitary condition of the Urban District of Amble during the year 1923.

The birth-rate is slightly increased and the number of deaths has decreased by twelve in comparison with the previous year.

In 1922 there were twelve deaths of infants under one year (known as the Infant Mortality), whereas last year there were only four deaths, which gives a mortality rate of 34.78 per 1000 births registered. This is a most remarkably low figure for an industrial population such as Amble has, and reflects great credit on the sanitary condition of the town. As an eminent authority on Public Health states, "The death rates of infants under one year and of children under five years (seven last year in Amble) are most important as they afford very positive evidence of the sanitary condition of a community."

## NATIONAL AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS.

Amble is a seaport town situated in the angle between the estuary of the river Coquet and the North Sea. The Urban District is flat and low lying and has few trees. It is greatly exposed, especially to north-easterly winds.

The town is built of stone from local quarries.

Most of the men are employed as coal miners at the adjacent collieries of Newburgh and Broomhill, which are distant  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles and 3 miles respectively from Amble.

The Amble Shipbuilding Company employ a number of men and boys at their shipyard, which is situated just outside the Amble district on the Braid.

There are a few fishermen.

Coal is shipped at Warkworth Harbour, the local port.

### I. GENERAL STATISTICS.

Area (acres), 1220 acres of land and inland water.

Population (1923), 4801.

Number of inhabited houses (1921), 1049.

Number of families or separate occupiers (1921), 1065.

Rateable value, £17,882.

Sum represented by a penny rate, £60.

### AMOUNT OF POOR LAW RELIEF.

The amount of outdoor relief expended in the Urban District for the year ending 31st December, 1923, was as follows:—

In money	£768	5	6	to ordinary paupers.
In kind ...	£306	16	2	to ordinary paupers and to unemployed.
Total	£1075	1	8	

This shows a decrease of £1355 1s 4d from the previous year.

## 2. EXTRACTS FROM VITAL STATISTICS OF THE YEAR 1923.

	Total.	M.	F.
Births—Legitimate ... ..	113	54	59
Births—Illegitimate ... ..	2	1	1

Birth-rate 23.95.

Deaths ... ..	56	29	27
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Death-rate 11.66.

Number of women dying in, or in consequence of, childbirth :—

From sepsis ... ..	Nil.
From other causes ... ..	1

Death-rate of infants under one year of age per 1000 births :—

Legitimate ... ..	34.78
Illegitimate ... ..	Nil.

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Total ... .. 34.78

Deaths from Measles (all ages) ... .. Nil.

Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages) ... Nil.

Deaths from Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age) Nil.

**Birth-rate.**—Registered births numbered 115 as compared with 114 in 1922. Two births were illegitimate (one less than the previous year), and were 1.73 per cent. of the births registered.

**Mortality.**—During 1923 52 deaths were registered in the Urban District. Inward transferable deaths numbered five, outward one. The total net deaths for the year were therefore 56.

They occurred throughout the year as follows :—

January	6	May	5	September	—
February	5	June	7	October	3
March	5	July	4	November	5
April	6	August	6	December	4

The death-rate of 11.66 compares favourably with that of 1922, viz., 14.12 per 1000.

The ages at death were as follows :—

Under 1 year	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4
1 and under 2 years	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
2 and under 5 years	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
5 and under 15 years	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	7
15 and under 25 years	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
25 and under 45 years	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
45 and under 65 years	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	7
65 and upwards	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	29

The principal causes of death were Senile Decay 12; Tuberculosis, 7; Cancer, 5; Apoplexy, 4; Heart Disease, 3, and Bronchitis, 3. Zymotic Disease caused 1 death.

**Infant Mortality (under 1 year).—**There were four deaths under 1 year, 3 males and 1 female, and the death-rate of 34.78 is the lowest for Amble since I became M.O.H. in July, 1910. As a comparison the following rates for Amble during the past eight years are given :—1916, 59.4; 1917, 62.5; 1918, 90.9; 1919, 58.2; 1920, 40; 1921, 77.5; 1922, 105.2; 1923, 34.78.

Debility from birth was the cause of the deaths.

Two died at the age of 7 days, one at the age of 21 days, and one when a month old.

### 3. NOTIFIABLE DISEASES DURING THE YEAR.

Disease.	Total cases notified.	Treated at Home.	Admitted to Hospital.	Total Deaths.
Diphtheria.	5	5	nil.	1
Searlet Fever.	23	23	nil.	1

Analysis of the total cases and deaths under age groups :—

Age Group.	Diphtheria.		Scarlet Fever.	
	Notifications.	Deaths.	Notifications.	Deaths.
2—3 years			1	
3—4 „			2	
4—5 „			1	
5—10 „	3	1	8	1
10—15 „	1		5	
15—20 „			4	
20—35 „	1		2	
Totals.	5	1	23	1

The type of diphtheria on the whole was mild. It was on the fauces of the infected children and no laryngeal symptoms developed. All received antitoxin and recovered, with one exception. One case occurred in February, two in March, one in June, and one in October.

Scarlet Fever again was present in the town. There were 3 cases in January, 2 in February, 7 in March, 8 in April, 1 in June, 1 in July, and 1 in November.

It was the modified mild type that has been so prevalent lately. No doubt the cycle will swing round again to the severer type. One case was fatal owing to kidney infection. Patients with infectious disease are isolated in their own homes as strictly as possible, as there is no infectious disease hospital to which they can be removed.

Disinfectants are supplied free by the Council and are invariably used in the infected houses. When cases are free from infection the house is disinfected by the Surveyor. Formalin vapour is used. The Urban authorities now possess a portable steam disinfecter ("Newman") which has proved itself to be very efficient.

**Smallpox.**—No primary vaccinations and re-vaccinations were performed by the Medical Officer of Health under the Public Health (Smallpox Prevention) Regulations, 1917. Seventy-one persons were vaccinated by private Medical Practitioners in October and November.

### TUBERCULOSIS.

New cases.			Deaths.	
Age Periods.	Pulmonary.	Non-Pulmonary.	Pulmonary.	Non-Pulmonary.
5 yrs to 10 yrs.	1	2	1	1
10—15 years	—	—	2	1
20—25 „	2	—	—	—
35—45 „	1	—	2	—
Totals.	4	2	5	2

Six new cases of Tuberculosis were notified during the year, as shown in tabular form above.

The non-pulmonary forms were cases of tuberculous glands in the neck. One was operated on and had the gland removed by excision, making a good recovery. The other was under treatment at the end of the year. Neither were fatal.

The pulmonary case in the 5-10 years group period was aged 6 years. This child had abdominal tuberculosis first, contracted a chill, and the lungs being invaded, the disease proved fatal.

The pulmonary cases between 20-25 both did well. One (a female) went to a sanatorium but only stayed a day. The disease seems now to be checked, but whether permanently or not it is impossible to state at present. The other, a male, refused sanatorium treatment. He improved under home-treatment and is now at work. The prognosis is not very favourable for him as heredity is against him. His father

died from the disease, and his sister (in group 10-15 years) died in 1923 from the same pulmonary type, developing from a tuberculous spine. The pulmonary case in group 35-45 had spinal tuberculosis with formation of a psoas abscess. She was admitted to an infirmary and operated on but did not do well afterwards. She developed pulmonary symptoms and died.

The remainder of the deaths were cases notified in previous years with two exceptions, one went many years back (about four).

The latter belonged to group 10-15 years and was a non-pulmonary type. She had tuberculous disease of the spine and later developed numerous tuberculous abscesses, causing death from waxy degeneration and exhaustion.

The other non-pulmonary death was in group 5-10 years, and the cause of death was tuberculous meningitis.

Of the two remaining fatal pulmonary types, one was a boy in group 10-15 years and the other was his mother in group 35-45 years. Both died in the same month. These two cases were not notified. The ratio of non-notified tuberculosis deaths to total tuberculosis deaths was 2 out of 7. The medical practitioner in question said he had no tuberculosis notification forms and had overlooked it. He was supplied with a fresh set of forms and since then there has been no neglect in notification.

## OPHTHALMIA NEONATORUM.

There were no notifications or cases of this disease in Amble during 1923.

## 4. CAUSES OF SICKNESS.

There was no special cause of sickness and invalidity in the district during the year.



## 5. SUMMARY (FOR REFERENCE) OF NURSING ARRANGEMENTS, HOSPITALS AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS AVAILABLE FOR THE DISTRICT.

### *Professional Nursing in the Home.*

- (a) General. There is a nursing association in Amble affiliated to the Northumberland Nursing Association. This local association derives its funds from voluntary subscriptions. The nurse principally does surgical work, e.g., dressings, etc., and attends patients who require skilled attention, e.g., for prevention of bed sores. She also does a few maternity cases, but always with a doctor.
- (b) For Infectious Diseases. There is no nursing arrangements for cases of Measles, Scarlet Fever, etc. The patient is nursed at his or her home by relatives under the direction of the doctor.

**Midwives.** There are no midwives practising in the district.

**Clinics, Etc.** There are no clinics in Amble. The School Doctor sends defective children for treatment to their family doctor.

There is no Institutional provision for unmarried mothers, illegitimate infants and homeless children in the district.

### *Hospital Administration.*

The hospital accommodation in Amble consists of one isolation hospital, situated on the Links. It is an iron building and has four beds. It was erected for the reception of smallpox patients.

The hospital was in good condition and was regularly inspected and aired.

No hospital exists for other infectious diseases.

There is no other hospital in the district.



For tuberculosis, Wooley Sanatorium is available through the County Council.

### ***Ambulance Facilities.***

- (a) For infectious cases. There is no ambulance for infectious cases and none is required, as these cases are nursed at home.
- (b) For non-infectious and accident cases. There is a Colliery Ambulance (Motor) stationed at Broomhill Colliery about 3 miles away, outside of the Amble Urban District. It is free to subscribers and a fee is charged to non-subscribers.

## **6. LABORATORY WORK.**

In cases of infectious disease, where necessary, preparations are examined for the Council at the Durham University College of Medicine Laboratory, Newcastle-on-Tyne. The opportunity is afforded to all doctors practising in the district, and is taken full advantage of by them. Diphtheria antitoxin is stocked by the M.O.H. for the Urban Council, and is supplied free to practitioners for use in cases which require it. It is promptly used in all cases of diphtheria.

## **7. SANITARY ADMINISTRATION.**

### ***Administration of Local and General Adoptive Acts.***

The following Acts have been adopted by the Council :—

Private Street Works Act.

Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1890 (Parts 1 and 3).

Infectious Disease (Prevention) Act, 1890.

Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1907.

No local Acts have been adopted.

### ***Work of Sanitary Officials.***

- (a) The report of the Surveyor for the year 1923 is appended.
- (b) The report of the Inspector of Nuisances for the year 1923 is appended.

### ***Refuse Disposal and Scavenging.***

Five ash closets were abolished and replaced by water closets.

In the district there were at the end of 1923 :—

Fresh water closets	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	417
Ash closets	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	425
Privy middens	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	23

The scavenging was carried out as usual by the Council's employees in a satisfactory manner. The excretal and dry refuse is removed bi-weekly.

### ***The Milk Supply.***

The milk supplied to the town was of the usual good quality. All the cowsheds have impervious floors, are well drained, lighted and ventilated. They were kept clean and whitewashed regularly, and all had a good water supply from the town mains.

No case of infectious disease was traced to the milk supply.

### ***Other Foods.***

The general food supply of the town was satisfactory. The premises where food was prepared and sold were kept in good condition.

No prosecutions took place under the Food and Drugs Act.

There is one bakehouse in the town. It is lined with white glazed tiles. It was found in a clean and satisfactory condition at each inspection.

### *Slaughter Houses.*

There are three slaughter houses in Amble. They are kept clean and whitewashed. Each has a good supply of water laid on.

No diseased meat was found in 1923 and the premises were regularly inspected.

There is no public abattoir.

No carcase or parts of carcasses were condemned for tuberculosis.

In 1914. In January 1923. In December 1923.

Registered	...	3	3	3
Licensed	...	—	—	—
		—	—	—
Total	...	3	3	3

### *Water Supply.*

The water supply during 1923 was of the usual good quality and abundant in quantity.

The supply is constant.

The analysis of the water, with the analyst's report is as follows :—

	1913.	1909.
Total solid matter in solution		
dried at 212 degs. F. ... ..	2.4500	2.2960
Chlorine existing as chlorides ...	1.539	2.336
Ammonia ... ..	0.012	0.010
Albumenoid Ammonia ... ..	0.002	0.003
Nitrogen existing as nitrates ...	0.013	0.003
Oxygen absorbed in 15 minutes		
at 80 degs. F. ... ..	Not determined.	do.
Oxygen absorbed in 4 minutes		
at 80 degs. F. ... ..	0.114	0.012
Lead and other poisonous metals	none	none
Hardness before boiling ... ..	Not determined.	do. ...
Hardness after boiling ... ..	Not determined.	do.
Appearance in 2ft. tube ... ..	brownish turbidity	
Smell when heated to 100 degs. F.	none	none
Microscopical exam. of sediment	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

This water will be rather hard, though not to an objectionable extent. Organically it is fairly pure water and it is in our opinion suitable for drinking and general domestic use. The sample contained in suspension nearly a tenth of a grain, per gallon, of iron hydroxide, and it is chiefly, if not entirely, this to which the turbidity of the water is due.

### ***Sewerage and Sewage Disposal.***

The water carriage of sewerage in the town discharges its sewage by a main outfall sewer into the harbour, and by a small outfall sewer into the tidal gut.

It was satisfactory during the year. Four blocked drains required attention and new drains were laid to the water closets which replaced the ash closets. The drains at the police station were attended to and brought up-to-date.

### ***Rivers Pollution.***

The insanitary condition of the Amble Gut, a tidal gut emptying into the river Coquet, which has been pointed out in previous reports, still remains unabated.

### ***Lodging Houses.***

One lodging house is registered in the district. It has been found clean and tidy at each inspection. No cases of infectious disease occurred in it during the year.

### ***Schools.***

There are five elementary schools in the Urban District. All are in a sanitary condition with an efficient supply of water. No school closure was necessary for infectious disease.

## **8. PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF.**

1. Medical Officer of Health, part-time, half salary from County Council.
2. Sanitary Inspector and Surveyor, whole time officer.

## 9. HOUSING.

No new houses have been erected during 1923.

It is expected that, under the Housing Act, 1923, a number of houses will be build on the Albert House Estate in 1924, by private enterprise.

A tabular statement on the nature of the work effected is appended.

## 10. PORT SANITATION.

The vessels arriving at Warkworth Harbour were regularly inspected during the year.

In 1923, 263 arrived in the harbour, as compared with 238 in 1922. The total tonnage was 156,739, or 23,606 more tonnage than in 1922, and nearly three times as much as in 1921.

Form A.—Amount of shipping entering the Port Sanitary District during the year 1923 :—

	Number.	Tonnage.
Total foreign steamers ... ..	158	111,019
Total Coastwise ... ..	105	45,720
Total ... ..	263	156,739

Number inspected by M.O.H., 30.

Number inspected by Sanitary Inspector, 179.

The ships were found in a satisfactory condition.

Form B.—No rats were destroyed in 1923.

Form C.—No vessels were plague infected.

No vessels were plague suspected.

No vessels were from infected ports.

Two hundred and fifty-two arrived in ballast and obtained cargoes of coal, the town's only export. Eleven coast-wise ships brought steel plates and rails for the Shipyard and for Broomhill Colliery.

All cases of illness were investigated at once, and there were no cases of infectious disease on any of these ships.

With regard to the present facilities for preventing the import and spread of disease, the town has an hospital of four beds which can be opened for the reception of smallpox cases.

If an infectious disease is discovered on board a ship, the crew are not allowed ashore until the ship and they are free from infection. Ships in quarantine have a station allotted to them.

No deaths occurred on board any of the ships in 1923.

The Council have now a portable steam disinfecter whereby clothing and bedding can be disinfected and disinfested.

## 11. FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS.

There are 12 factories and 27 workshops in the district. Thirty-three children and young persons were examined in 1923 and none were rejected.

The various premises were kept in a sanitary condition. No written notices were required and no prosecutions were instituted. No nuisances required abatement and there were no offences under the Factory and Workshops Act.

The following are registered workshops :—

Dressmaking and Millinery	...	...	...	...	5
Tailoring	...	...	...	...	3
Bakehouses	...	...	...	...	1
Trades such as Blacksmiths, Plumbers, Joiners,					
Etc.	...	...	...	...	18

There were no workplaces and no outworkers.

In conclusion, gentlemen, please accept my thanks for your courtesy and consideration to me throughout the year.

I wish also to thank your Surveyor, Mr Burton, for the efficient and ready help he has always given me.

I am, Gentlemen,

Yours obedient servant,

**JAMES ANDERSON LOUGHRIDGE.**

THE  
**ANNUAL REPORT**  
OF THE  
**Sanitary Inspector of Amble**  
**For the Year 1923.**

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To Dr J. A. Loughridge, M.B.Ch.B.

Dear Sir,—

I beg to present my report of the Sanitary Administration of the Amble Urban District for the year 1923 together with the tabular statements required.

**HOUSING.**

The inspection of houses has been continued during the year and four informal notices and eleven statutory notices were served for repairs to houses.

The particulars of the repairs effected are set out in the tabular statement hereto appended.

No new houses have been erected and one tenement house has been converted into a self-contained house.

The Council have put into operation the provisions of the Housing Act, 1923, and have offered 53 free sites on the Albert House Estate for houses to be built by private enterprise.

The area of each site is approximately 300 square yards and the houses are to be built in pairs.

At the end of the year 28 applications for sites had been received and the building of houses is expected to commence early in the year.

**SANITARY CONVENIENCES.**

Five ash-closets have been abolished and in each case water closets have been substituted in lieu thereof.

Eleven nuisances arising from defective water closets have been abated.



The water closets in the district now number 417, ash closets 425, and privy middens, 23.

### DRAINAGE.

Four nuisances arising from blocked drains were abated and an old dipstone trap was abolished and a trapped gully substituted.

New drains were laid to the five water closets substituted for ash closets and an entirely new system of drainage with inspection chambers and disconnecting traps was laid down at the police station.

### SEWERS.

The sewers have been adequate for the requirements of the town and no flooding from high tides, nor heavy rain, has been experienced.

The main sewer empties into tidal water at the entrance to the harbour.

### DISINFECTION.

Forty-three houses have been disinfected owing to cases of infectious disease; scarlet fever 34, diphtheria 6, tuberculosis 3.

Disinfection is carried out by means of Formalin lamps and the spraying of walls where necessary.

The Council have purchased a "Newman" portable steam disinfector for the disinfection of bedding and clothing.

### SHIPPING.

263 vessels arrived at the port during the year, of which 252 were in ballast and 11 were loaded with steel plates and rails for Broomhill Collieries and the Amble Shipbuilding Co., Ltd.

Inwards.	Number.	Tonnage.
Foreign—Ballast ... ..	158	111,019
Foreign—Cargo ... ..		
Coastwise—Ballast ... ..	94	44,161
Coastwise—Cargo ... ..	11	1,559
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	263	156,739

179 vessels were inspected and no cases of infectious disease were reported, and the vessels were clear of rats.

Of the vessels inspected 120 were from foreign ports and 59 from British ports.

A satisfactory state of cleanliness was maintained throughout the year.

### SCAVENGING.

The whole of the town refuse is disposed of by tipping in disused quarries and on farm lands for manurial purposes.

The collections are bi-weekly and the whole of the scavenging and disposal of refuse is carried out by the Council's staff of workmen.

### DAIRIES AND COWSHEDS.

The cowsheds, dairies and milkshops are regularly inspected, and are kept in a clean condition.

They are all supplied with water from the town mains and regularly limewashed.

The particulars of the number of persons registered are as under :—

Wholesale Purveyors of Milk	...	...	...	...	4
Retail Purveyors of Milk	...	...	...	...	10
Cowkeepers and Dairymen	...	...	...	...	8
Number of cows kept (approx.)	...	...	...	...	101

### FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS.

The number of factories and workshops in the district is the same as in the previous year, viz., 12 factories and 27 workshops.

They have been kept in a satisfactory condition, and no action for contravention of regulations has been necessary.

### COMMON LODGING HOUSE.

There is one common lodging house in the town and it has sufficient accommodation for the needs of the district.

It is registered for 38 persons and is always kept in good order.

### **SLAUGHTER HOUSES.**

There are three slaughter houses in the town and they are regularly limewashed and kept in a clean condition, and all garbage is taken to farm lands and buried, and the floors thoroughly washed after slaughtering.

### **WATER SUPPLY.**

The water supply to the town was constant during the year ; there was no shortage and the supply was sufficient for both domestic and industrial purposes.

### **FIRE BRIGADE.**

The Council's Fire Brigade was called out on one occasion during the year and they were successful in confining the fire to the particular portion of the building in which it originated.

The damage to the premises was covered by insurance.

### **HIGHWAYS AND STREETS.**

About 1200 tons of road metal were rolled in during the year in the re-surfacing and maintenance of highways and streets.

Tar painting of the streets and roads was continued with beneficial results, it prevents dust and adds to the life of the road.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

**W. BURTON.**

1923. SANITARY INSPECTOR'S ANNUAL REPORT (Sanitary Officer's Order, 1910, Art. XX. 16).

Name of District, Amble.	Housing	Drainage	Sanitary Conveniences.
	Nuisances Overcrowding Unit for H. Hab. Defect. Spouting Dampness Foul Untreated Insufficient Structly Defect Insufficient Foul		
Population, 4801.			
W. Burton, Inspector.			
Number of Inspections made.			
Number of Defects or contraventions of bye-laws found	88	2	10
Number of Defects, etc., outstanding from previous year	27	-	-
Number of Informal Notices by the Inspector	4	2	1
Number of Defects or contraventions remedied after informal notice	12	1	1
Number of Statutory Notices served by Local Authority	11		
Number of Defects, etc., remedied after Statutory Notice	54		

# Amble Urban District.

## HOUSING (Inspection of District) REGULATIONS, 1910.

Statistics for the Year ended December 31st, 1923.

No. of Dwelling Houses Inspected.		111	GENERAL CHARACTER OF DEFECTS FOUND.			
No. of Dwelling Houses found to be unfit.		—				
No. of Dwelling Houses in disrepair.		45				
Complaints that houses were unfit		—				
(a) by householder.	(b) by Parish Council.	—				
Closing Orders	(a) No. of representations L.A. (b) No. of orders made.	—				
No. of Houses Voluntary closed	(a) after notice Sec. 23, 1919. (b) without notice.	—				
No. of Houses Demolished	(a) under demolition orders. (b) voluntary by owners.	—				
No. of Houses made fit for habitation	(a) after informal notice. (b) after notice Sec. 23, 1919. (c) after closing order made. (d) by L.A. in default of owner.	12 28 — —				
Housing.	(a) No. of representations of obstructive buildings. (b) No. of such buildings demolished. (c) Representations as to unhealthy areas. Part 1 and 2.	— — — —				
			Defects found.	Defects remedied.	Not remedied.	
			7	7	—	
			7	4	3	
			2	2	—	
			21	17	4	
			3	1	2	
			9	4	5	
			6	4	2	
			11	11	—	
			22	16	6	
			88	66	22	